

Nez Perce National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

Amendment No. 4

March, 1989

The purpose of this amendment is to clarify direction regarding visual resource management on the Nez Perce National Forest and provide consistency with Forest Service policy regarding visual resource management procedures.

The following replace standards for Visual Resources found on Page II-16 of the Forest Plan.

1. All landscape-altering activities will meet adopted Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs). Duration of visual impacts should meet the guidelines outlined for each VQO in Agriculture Handbook No. 462-Chapter 2.
2. Visual Quality Objectives will be adopted during Forest Plan implementation. Interim VQOs developed during the Forest planning process will be compared to inventoried VQOs by interdisciplinary teams during project analysis. Adopted VQOs will be determined for the project area by the responsible official. Rationale for adopting VQO's included will be included in environmental documents for proposed projects.

The following definitions are in addition to those included in the Glossary Page VII-1 to VII-26.

VQO (Inventoried)

VQOs developed using the procedures described in Agriculture Handbook 462 Volume 2, Chapter 1--The Visual Management System. These objectives are pure in that they are based on only variety classes and sensitivity levels, and they have not been modified to accomplish other resource goals.

VQO (Interim)

VQOs established during the development of the Forest Plan. Assignments of VQO's by management area are based upon a visual resource inventory conducted in 1979

VQO (Adopted)

VQOs determined during Forest Plan implementation. They are determined by the responsible official and are statements of policy or management direction

The following statement replaces the one displayed for Visuals on Page II-27 of the Forest Plan.

Adopted VQOs will be met and impacts to the visual resource minimized within the foreground viewing areas from trails 401, 407, 431, 478, 414, 415, 802 (west from sections 28 and 29 to trail 415) in project design and layout or by relocation of trails.

The following statement replaces the one displayed for Visual Resource on Page III-15 of the Forest Plan.

3. Adopted VQOs established during Plan implementation will recognize the high visual sensitivity of these use areas.

The following statement replaces the one displayed for Visual Resource on Page III-38 of the Forest Plan.

2. Interim visual quality objectives are modification or maximum modification. Adopted VQOs will recognize sensitive (Sensitivity Level 1 and 2) viewpoints and travel routes.

The following statement replaces the one displayed for Visual Resource on Page III-49 of the Forest Plan.

2. Interim visual quality objectives are retention or partial retention.

The following statement replaces the statement on Visual Quality Objectives found on page IV-4 of the Forest Plan.

Interim visual quality objectives (VQOs) for the area range from "retention" to "maximum modification". The acres of each interim VQO are shown below:

The following statement replaces the statement on Visual Quality Objectives found on page IV-8 of the Forest Plan.

Interim visual quality objectives (VQOs) for the area range from "retention" to "modification". The acres of each interim VQO are shown below:

The following statement replaces the statement on Visual Quality Objectives found on page IV-11 of the Forest Plan.

Interim visual quality objectives (VQOs) for the area range from "retention" to "maximum modification". The acres of each interim VQO are shown below:

The following statement replaces the existing language for Item 2d in Appendix O of the Forest Plan on Page O-7.

Monitoring effects on the visual resource will be determined using two basic techniques.

First, as VQO's are adopted during Forest Plan implementation the acreage of VQOs adopted forest-wide can be tracked and compared to the interim VQO acreages in the FEIS for the Forest Plan. The primary source of this information (acres/ maps) will be the environmental documents prepared implementing various management practices. Maps of adopted VQO's will be compiled and updated continually. Trends will be evaluated every 5 years.

Interim VQO maps are on file in the Forest headquarters so no additional costs will be required to generate the data base. Accuracy of the mapped VQOs will continue to improve as implementation occurs across the Forest.

Second, visually sensitive projects will be monitored on-site. Monitoring of specific projects will be conducted on those projects each District selects annually for resource monitoring. The monitoring report for each project will state the project met or did not meet the adopted VQOs and why. If the project did not meet the adopted VQO's, the report will also state what mitigation measures would bring the project into compliance with the adopted VQOs and what could be done on future projects of similar nature to ensure VQO's are met.

The following should be added to the list of Monitoring and Evaluation Requirements on pages III-6, III-8, III-10, III-12, III-14, III-16, III-25, III-27, III-27, III-29, III-33, III-36, III-39, III-45, III-48, III-51, III-55, III-57, III-60, III-63 and III-66.

Insert "2d".

*** End of Amendment ***

(Note: see attached letter and DM)

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Nez Perce NF

Rt. 2, Box 475
Grangeville, ID. 83530

Reply to: 1920
FP Amendment #4

Date: March 30, 1989

Dear Forest Planning Participant:

Resolution of Forest Plan appeals and implementation of the Nez Perce Forest Plan are continuing. As we have proceeded with Forest Plan implementation we have encountered conflicting Forest Plan direction and a need for further clarification in management of the visual resource.

The environmental analysis of proposed timber sales and road construction in the Wing Creek-Twentymile area has identified conflicting Forest Plan direction regarding visual resource management that must be resolved prior to issuing the FEIS/ROD for these projects. The following table summarizes the conflicts and needed changes to the Forest Plan.

Conflicting Standards/Direction

Procedures for establishing VQOs:

Forestwide standards Page II-16 describe a process that is not consistent with the Forest Service Visual Management System (Agriculture Handbook 462, Volume 2) and existing FSM direction.

Visual Quality Objective definitions:

VQO's are defined in the Forest Plan and FEIS glossary. The terms "interim" VQO, "inventoried" VQO and "adopted" VQO are not defined and their use tends to confuse those implementing the Forest Plan.

Conflicting standards for specific areas:

VQOs established for trails within the Wing Creek-Twentymile area (Page II-27) can not be achieved if direction specifying the location of collector roads agreed to by the MRDA advisory committee is used (see map Page IV-2 and VI-3).

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Conflicting Standards/Direction

Forest Plan Changes

Modify existing standards.

Define the procedures to be followed. Separate analysis standards from resource standards. Reference procedures in Agriculture Handbook 462--The Visual Management System.

Add definitions for adopted, inventoried and interim VQO.

FSM 2383.13 (R-1 SUPP 67 9/79) defines the differences between inventoried, interim and adopted VQOs.

Modify existing standards.

Recognize the sensitivity of viewing from specified trails and allow mitigation during project design/layout or relocation of trails specified.

Forest Plan Changes

Illogical VQO assignments relative to viewing locations:

Interim VQOs are specified for specific management areas. In some situations they are not sensitive to viewing from adjacent locations the Plan specifies as being sensitive (eg. MA 3). The FS-VRM processes are designed to recognize sensitive view points and assign appropriate VQOs. These processes should be followed. Present direction will allow conflicting VQO's to be located on adjacent sites.

Monitoring requirements fail to address objectives for visual resource management:

Two objectives are stated for the Visual Resource on Page II-3. Monitoring requirements in Appendix O only provide for monitoring of VQOs as adopted. The monitoring of project execution and use of design measures for visual resource protection or enhancement are not addressed.

MA monitoring requirements for visual resources omitted:

Visual resource monitoring requirements were omitted from several MAs. As described in Appendix O monitoring requirements are established for all MAs.

Modify existing standards.

Adopt VQOs during Plan implementation. VQOs identified in the Plan are "interim" until verified using more detailed inventory information.

Add requirements for project execution monitoring.

Modify requirements for monitoring to be consistent with processes described above and provide for monitoring project execution.

Add monitoring requirement 2d to MA 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23.

I have decided to amend the Forest Plan by modifying the standards listed in Chapter II (Forestwide Management Direction), modifying the visual resource standards in Chapter III (Management Area Direction) and modifying specific monitoring requirements in Appendix O dealing with visual resources. These changes ensure implementation and monitoring will be consistent with Forest Service policy and procedures for visual resource management.

The Decision Memo and Forest Plan Amendment are enclosed. Please attach the amendment to your copy of the Nez Perce Forest Plan.

/Tom Kovalicky/

TOM KOVALICKY
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures

Decision Memo

Forest Plan Amendment No. 4

Nez Perce National Forest

Idaho County, Idaho

The purpose of Amendment No. 4 of the Nez Perce National Forest Plan is to modify standards listed in Chapter II (Forestwide management Direction), modify the visual resource standards in Chapter III (Management Area Direction) and modify specific monitoring requirements in Forest Plan Appendix O dealing with visual resources. These changes ensure implementation and monitoring will be consistent with Forest Service policy and procedures for visual resource management.

The need for changes and clarification in management standards was the result of environmental analysis of proposed timber sales and road construction in the Wing Creek-Twentymile area. During the comment period of the Wing Creek Twenty Mile Draft Environmental Impact Statement concern was expressed on conflicting Forest Plan language pertaining to visual resource management. An interdisciplinary team was used to analyze the concerns and develop a proposal for correcting the Forest Plan.

Forest Service policy permits Forest Plan amendments resulting from analysis conducted during Forest Plan implementation (36 CFR 219.10(f)) and FSM 1922.5. I have determined the proposed changes are not significant since they are minor changes in standards and guidelines and will not alter the multiple-use goals and objectives for long-term land and resource management.

Adoption of this amendment will not significantly change the forestwide environmental impacts disclosed in the Nez Perce Forest Plan Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This amendment is categorically excluded from further documentation in an EIS or EA (ID No. 16, FSM 1950 and ID No. 2, FSH 1909.15)

Additional information can be obtained from:

Joe Bednorz, Staff Officer
Land Management Planning
Nez Perce National Forest
Route 2, Box 475
Grangeville, Idaho 83530
(208) 983-1950

Steve Solem, District Ranger
Clearwater Ranger District
Nez Perce National Forest
Route 2, Box 475
Grangeville, Idaho 83530
(208) 983-1963

Implementation of this decision will begin immediately. This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217.8 and 36 CFR 217.9. Notice of appeal must be in writing and submitted within 45 days of this decision to:

John W. Mumma, Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 7669
Missoula, Montana 59807

A copy of the notice of appeal must be sent to:

Tom Kovalicky, Forest Supervisor
Nez Perce National Forest
Rt. 2, Box 475
Grangeville, Idaho 83530

/Tom Kovalicky/

3/30/89

TOM KOVALICKY
Forest Supervisor

Date